

PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENTS

IN CHARGE OF
LUCY L. DROWN

WORK OF THE GARFIELD ALUMNÆ

By R. MILDRED PURMAN

THE Alumnæ Association of the Training-School for Nurses of the Garfield Memorial Hospital of Washington, D. C., is now engaged in a very interesting work,—that of giving talks on nursing to the St. Albans Branch of the Girls' Friendly Society.

The majority of these girls are employed in the shops, and in many cases are members of large families who have little practical knowledge of how to care for those among them who are unfortunate enough to be sick.

Mrs. Bratenahl, wife of the rector of St. Albans, is secretary of this branch and deeply interested in these girls. Feeling their helplessness in the sick-room and their need of practical knowledge, as the luxury of a trained nurse is out of the question for them, and their own efforts must supplement the work of the district nurse, she appealed to the Garfield Alumnæ for instruction in home nursing for them.

The nurses took the matter up in a most enthusiastic way. The subjects to be considered were classified, and each nurse volunteered her services for the talk she felt best fitted to give.

The enthusiastic reception of the plan will be better appreciated when it is known that among the volunteers were even the busiest members of the alumnae—the superintendent of the Training-School for Nurses of St. Elizabeth Hospital for the Insane, the superintendent of the Girls' Reform School, and the matron of the Garfield Hospital Annex for Contagious Diseases.

The energetic president started the course by a talk and practical demonstration upon the preparation of the sick-room, the dress and qualifications of the nurse, bedmaking, changing the bed-linen, and the patient's night-clothes.

The talks are given every two weeks,—in the evening, as the girls have no leisure time during the day. They are given in the Parish Hall, which is loaned for the purpose, and the ladies who are associate mem-

bers of the "Girls' Friendly Society" have been most kind in supplying the necessary material for the practical demonstrations which accompany the talks whenever possible. For example, the pupils are not only taught how to make a bed properly, but must make it themselves, as the object is to enable the girls to adopt these suggestions in their own home lives.

The nurse wears her uniform in order that its severe plainness and absolute spotlessness may impart its own lesson.

Any member of the alumnae who is not busy is ready to act as substitute in caring for the patient if the nurse who gives the talk needs one during her absence.

The list which is appended is not systematized as well as it would have been if it were not necessary to allow each nurse to choose the most convenient date and to select her own subject. Merely the headings are given, and each nurse is allowed her own discretion in elaborating her topic:

- " I. Room; nurse; bed, making and changing; changing patients' clothes.
- II. Bathing; care of patient.
- III. Baby, bath, care of; artificial feeding; convulsions; infantile diseases.
- IV. Anatomy and physiology.
- V. Application and making of compresses, poultices, etc.
- VI. Minor injuries, accidents, and emergencies, with dressings.
- VII. Bandaging.
- VIII. Diet cooking.
- IX. Disinfection; ventilation; care of room.
- X. Symptoms.
- XI. Medicines, giving of; poisons and antidotes.
- XII. Special diseases.
- XIII. Medical appliances.

At the same time, another course of talks was outlined to be given to poor women once a month, beginning in October.

These women are mothers of the little children of the "Christ Child Society," to which Miss Mary Merrick, who is an invalid, devotes her time and self. In her eager desire to teach these mothers how to care for the little ones, she too appealed to the alumnae, and it has responded admirably. The talks in this course combine most of the subjects and demonstrations given in the former course, but are supplemented by obstetrical instruction:

- I. Room; bed; baths; care of patient.
 - II. During and after pregnancy; confinement; care of breasts, pads, etc.
 - III. Care of baby; infantile diseases; convulsions; artificial feeding.
 - IV. Minor injuries; emergencies; hemorrhages; bandaging.
 - V. Disinfection; ventilation; hygiene.
 - VI. Food and preparation.
 - VII. Application and making of poultices, pastes, etc.
 - VIII. Symptoms; giving medicines; poisons and antidotes.
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A NEW DEPARTURE

A YOUNG woman completed her course of training in one of our well-established schools and began private nursing, in which she was eminently successful.

Ill-health came, and after a struggle to keep on with her work she was obliged to undergo a severe operation. After a time, district nursing was taken up, as causing less strain on reduced physical strength. This also had to be relinquished.

Ways and means of earning a livelihood became a study.

Naturally ingenuous, the graduate nurse had contrived for herself a comfortable and satisfactory swathe such as must be worn by those who have passed through the trial of an abdominal operation.

Knowing that surgeons in their practice outside of hospitals are often troubled to procure the appliances required, the idea came to her that in this field was an opening for her.

As the products of her skill become known, there is an increasing demand for these adjuncts of surgical operations by surgeons far and near. The order for the swathe usually comes from the surgeon. If possible, she visits the patient and attends to the measurements for the swathe. If the distance is too great or for any reason she cannot visit the patient, she sends an order-blank containing the necessary directions. Each swathe receives her personal attention, so that its peculiar fitness for the individual patient is insured. Although she is debarred from active service for the sick, nevertheless, her patients "rise up and call her blessed."

This result and others of a similar nature go far to demonstrate that the opportunities for creating and improving appliances for the comfort of the sick are especially within the province of the nurse.